

*Washington, DC* – U.S. Representatives John Hall (D-NY19) and Patrick Murphy (D-PA08) today called on the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve and expand the level of information given to veterans seeking help with disability assistance. "Most states have a number of different programs designed to reward veterans for their faithful service to our nation," Murphy and Hall wrote in a letter to VA Under Secretary for Benefits Daniel L. Cooper. "However, we are concerned that veterans may be unaware of state benefits that could have a significant impact on their lives."

Veterans applying for various benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs are not necessarily informed of a range of state benefits available to them. Though the State of New York offers property tax assistance for certain classes of veterans, many veterans continue to pay full property taxes for years after they begin receiving benefits or applying for VA assistance.

Murphy and Hall suggested that the Department of Veterans Affairs might better notify veterans of the full range of their available benefits by including a section on the VA award letter veterans receive encouraging those veterans to check with their state and local governments to see if they might be eligible for expanded benefits.

"By simply adding one line of information, we can make sure that veterans in need receive the benefits they deserve. This common-sense step is something all of us can agree is a good idea," added Murphy.

"The simple step of posting a notice on the award letter veterans receive from the VA could have a significant impact on the lives of some veterans struggling to make ends meet," said Hall.

"We would appreciate it if you could look into the possibility of including such language when contacting veterans who have been awarded a disability rating or have filed for benefits," wrote Murphy and Hall. "It is a small but important step in ensuring that, after their honorable service to our country, veterans are aware of all the benefits that are available to them."

Murphy is a veteran of the war in Iraq and serves on the House Armed Services Committee and the Select Committee on Intelligence. Hall serves as Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.